

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 14, 2010

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

We write to urge swift consideration and confirmation of Sanford Blitz as Federal Co-Chair of the Northern Border Regional Commission. The Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act (P.L. 111-85) included \$1.5 million for the establishment of the Northern Border Regional Commission, which was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill (P.L. 110-246). However, in order for the commission to invest in the belt of counties along the Northern border from Maine through New York, a federal co-chair must be appointed. Therefore, confirmation of Mr. Blitz is critical to ensuring that this newly established commission is up and running in a timely manner.

The Northern Border Regional Commission is a joint federal-state economic development commission that covers the most economically distressed portions of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and northern New York. For decades, communities in this region have faced tough economic circumstances that have resulted in the loss of jobs and businesses, as well as a lack of new opportunities for displaced workers and young people. The current economic recession has only deepened these troubles. Even as the country as a whole is on the road to a full recovery, this area still faces significant impediments to economic development.


We commend President Obama for nominating Mr. Blitz as Federal Co-Chair, and we are confident that he will continue his successful leadership at the Northern Border Regional Commission. Currently, as the founder and Principal of Emesbee Associates, Mr. Blitz assists public and private entities in securing grants and loans. From 2007-2009, he served as the Regional Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration, overseeing offices in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. In addition, Mr. Blitz is an adjunct professor with the University of Maine's Department of Public Administration. For 13 years, he served as the Economic Development Representative for the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration.

As the authors and cosponsors of language authorizing the Northern Border Regional Commission, we strongly believe in its regional approach to economic development and ability to make targeted investments that will combat poverty, address the systemic barriers that prevent increased investment and economic growth throughout our states, and improve the quality of life for residents. But the critically important work of this new commission cannot begin until Mr.

Blitz is confirmed. People across our region are suffering the effects of the economic downturn, and it is imperative that we have every tool available to begin the work of reversing the damage of this recession.

We appreciate your timely consideration of this request.


Sincerely,



WILLIAM L. OWENS  
Member of Congress



MICHAEL A. ARCURI  
Member of Congress



PAUL W. HODES  
Member of Congress




MICHAEL H. MICHAUD  
Member of Congress



CHELLIE PINGREE  
Member of Congress



CAROL SHEA-PORTER  
Member of Congress



PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress